B 101 614 Kaarta people are called Nya-Ngolo-la after Nya-Ngolo, an ancestor of the chiefs of the clan; and the Ségou people are called Barama-Ngolo-la after Barama-Ngolo, an ancestor of their clan.

B S 101 [567] Nicknames are also used between individuals of different tribes. The Soninké often call the Bambara Dyon-ko (slaves) because, having long been engaged in the slave trade, they sold many Bambara as slaves (1). The Bambara generally call the

1. See in the Kaarta chronicle which follows how Massa and others after him captured caravans of Bambara slaves belonging to Soninké owners.

Soninké Marka (for Mara-ka). They still use the term Marka dialan'u (dry Marka people) to designate the Soninké who abandoned their own dialect in favor of the Bambara dialect. On the other hand, they use the term Marka kan'-fo-la-u (those who speak Marka) for those among the Soninké who have retained their own dialect.

In the Ségou region, the Bambara use the expression Bani-n-kono-u (birds of the Bani) for the Soninké, people who live along the banks of [11] that river; their more general term for the Soninké is the surname Dyeme-ka-u, from Dyeme (or Dyime) meaning "a long-legged water bird" of the marabou species. According to the interpretation given to me, the names Bani-n-kono-u and Dyeme-ka-u allude to periodic journeys made by the Soninké to the large commercial centers to the south, especially Ouorodougou [Ouagadougou?].

The Ségou country was called Dyeme-ka-u by the Bambara during the period of the Soninké rule (1). On the other hand, when

1. At this period, the Soninké chief, Souleiman-ba Kofta, lived at Sora, today a ruin, which the Bambara call Soro-toumou (ruins of Sora) and which is situated in the Ségou country between Massa-la and Kono-dimini.

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and Appellations among the Malinké...] in the Bulletin du Comité des études historiques et scientifiques de l'A.O.F. 1918, nos. 3 and 4.

inhabited by independent Bambara.

This clan or, as one is tempted to say, this empire of Keïta was formed in the thirteenth century after wars between Soumangourou Kanté and Soun Dyata Keïta and with the aid of various elements (3), including a group of Mandinké which

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3. In the same way we shall see Biton forming furu-ba-dyon' from the ton-dyon', slaves captured from the chief of Dina, and from captives acquired elsewhere. In the same connection, see in the Tarikh el Fettach the curious story of the 24 slave tribes of the Songhaï clan which came from the Mandé clan.

[16] had been organized earlier by (1) a chief named Gourmandana.

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1. Within the clan, the slaves, who always constitute the power of a clan, are divided into groups named in accordance with a particular aspect of organization. The Boula seem to have enjoyed a degree of consideration comparable to that attained by the Ton-dyon' at Ségou. Judging by the meaning of the word Bula, it would seem that they were "freedmen," and this is the meaning given by native traditionists. On the subject of the Boula, see the afore-mentioned work by Humblot. Boula women have the given name of Damba and they are addressed as Sakiliba, while the men are called Soussoro. This practice of giving a common name to a whole

*173 to be dug in the courtyard of his house and then summoned the recalcitrant elders, ostensibly for consultation on urgent matters. When they had arrived, Mamari told them that he wished to interview them two by two in order better to know their opinion concerning the questions under consideration. The elders refused. Then, at a sign from Mamari, [40] men who had been posted at hand for the purpose hurled themselves upon the elders, massacred them and threw their corpses into the well, which was then sealed up. It is said that there were 740 elders and also that, since that time, people from Doukounna and Banan-koroni who reach Ségou in the evening never spend the night there.

Now deprived of their rightful leaders, the people of Doukounna and Banan-koroni were henceforth at the mercy of Mamari. He recalled the column from Kirango and, as soon as it had arrived, he summoned the young men of Doukounna and Banan-koroni. Without giving them any explanation, he ordered them to wear their hair in the fashion of the ton-dyon', i.e., to have their hair shaved off except for two locks at the forehead and another at the nape of the neck. The young men protested that they were free men, but Mamari told them: "Your elders are buried here because they persisted in acting like free men, and there are now only women and slaves in your villages." When they were told what had happened in their absence, the young men realized that any resistance was out of the question; so they submitted and went to swell the numbers of the ton-dyon'.

[309 ● 567]

This bold act gave Mamari a permanent army and he was so well aware of the extent of his success that his pride was already openly displayed. "The Dyémé-ka-dougou," he said, "extends from the Mindaka watercourse to that of Sitadougou. On the other bank of the Mindaka, the country belongs to the people of Doua. Let it be well understood that you are either on their side or on mine. We shall no longer eat groundnuts in the ton' together, nor drink our rounds of ton' millet beer. I am the son of Allah and henceforth shall drink only a king's beer in a royal cup. Let those who want to drink with me remain, and all others depart. From now on, the only free men are Nyé Tyétigi of Banan-koroni and Mansa of Banamba. All the rest are my slaves. Therefore, let each village send me 100 men to make up my personal guard."

*173 Déssé-koro (1789-1802). According to one tradition, Déssé was captured at the same time as Foro-koro and taken with him to Ségou where he is said to have been marked with the [115] tatoo (1) peculiar to the slaves of the Ségou branch of the

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1. This well-known tatoo consists of three cuts on each side of the face running from the temples to the lower jaw in front of the ears.

Kouloubali. Authority would normally have passed to Déssé on the death of Séba Mana, but because Déssé's fate was uncertain it was offered instead to Sira Bo. The latter is said to have refused at first, but he accepted when his brother Mo-siré guaranteed that even if Déssé should return, the power would not be withdrawn. When Déssé returned ten years later, he respected the promise made by his brother Mo-siré and waited until the death of Sira Bo to take command.

Whatever may be the truth of the matter, Déssé took advantage of the quarrels that arose at Ségou upon Ngolo Dyara's death to capture Niamina. It is said that a small forest of baobab trees later arose on the spot where his troops had encamped.

When Ma-n-son had been relieved of the worst of his worries by his victory over Nyana-n-koro, he was anxious to avenge the capture of Niamina (2) and so turned his attention to

2. The relations between Déssé and the people of Ségou are very obscure. Some say that, on being asked for help by Nyana-n-koro, Déssé stipulated that he would only agree to help if Foro-koro's skull were returned to him. When he had gained possession of the relic, he returned to Kaarta, promising to come back at the appropriate time. He did in fact return and encamped near Ségou after the defeat and death of Nyana-n-koro; he

601 the household, they are ba-u (mothers), and the title ba is commonly used out of deference or respect. Very old women are addressed as mama, "grandmother" or "ancestress." [163]

564 Members of castes. These are free men who are destitute and form a kind of clientage of important families. We shall discuss them later on.

567 Slaves. Only slaves entrusted with special duties lived in the house. When a master discerned qualities in a new slave that might make him useful in the house, he kept him in his own service and often treated him well and generously. Custom gave the children of such a slave a privileged position; since they were "born in the house" (wolo-so-u, they could not be sold except in the case of extreme necessity. All confidential servants were recruited from the wolo-so-u, and the eldest, most experienced, and most favored often acquired great influence in family affairs. They knew more about the secrets and resources of the community than most of its members.

Another category of slaves is made up of those who after three generations were ipso facto freed (dyongoron'-u). They have played an important role in native society.

2. The Patriarchal Community or Patriarchy

769 The ancestral spirit-god. In order to view a custom from its most expressive aspect, it is necessary to observe it in its fullest development and, at the same time, to note anything adventitious or foreign that modifies its appearance and procedure or alters its basis.

The cult of the ancestors is the very essence of the family, and the most characteristic manifestation of this cult is the funeral ceremonies for the head of a family, the patriarch (fa). Here, one is present at the transformation of a man into an ancestral spirit-god within the span of 40 days.

This period is an interval during which a link between the past and the future is formed in the present, whereby

763 A gunshot today most likely signals the death of a hunter or the father of a hunter. In any case, however, there are always cries and vociferations by [165] the women, who are joined by their friends, relatives, and neighbors.

Horsemen ride off to notify any of the sons of the deceased who are away.

[567] Meanwhile, the chief of the slaves, the major-domo, the confidential agent, or a friend or neighbor of the deceased goes to inform the chief and the principal men in the village.

764 These personages come to the mortuary house at once, spear in hand. After being received by the man temporarily in charge of the house, they go to the deceased to discover his identity and at the same time express their condolences to the family represented by the person who received them; then they withdraw.

In the mortuary hut silence descends while the women prepare the body. They wash it with warm water usually [824] scented with basil, su-ko-la (Ocimum album and febrifugum); they dry it and wrap it in pieces of native white cotton material or else dress it in its own garments, likewise white. A mat [285] of coarse straw (tyekala, kara) is placed in the middle of the room. A fine, flexible mat made of iphène leaves is put on top of it, and the women lay out the corpse on the second mat. Sometimes they place a grindstone on the abdomen to keep it from swelling.

When these preparations are completed, the women, [352 516] dressed in white native cloth, sit down in the native fashion on tiny stools in the mortuary hut. Those who come in from outside give evidence of terrible grief: they cry out, they weep, [152] they cover their heads with a bit of cloth and hurry toward the mortuary hut. As soon as they enter, they become quiet and stop weeping.

152 764 767 Among the Bambara grief is never silent; it is customary to show it overtly. As soon as there is a crowd, the singing begins, in rhythm to the clapping of hands. One person or another will be inspired to sing of the achievements and virtues of the deceased. Professional weepers and mourners mingle with the crowd, guiding and gradually encouraging the noisy display.

596 614 Most often, however, the debates are concerned either with legitimacy or with primogeniture, and it is by no means rare for a fa, before his death, to insist that the one chosen be the one designated by custom and to threaten to call down curses on anyone who should try to bypass him or to reject his authority (1).

1. Ngolo and Ma-n-son both acted in this manner, according to the chronicle of Ségou.

In associations which have adopted a community organization analogous to that of the family, the election of a head is determined solely by these factors. It may be concluded that these are the bases consecrated by custom and that any other arrangements can only result in the worst kind of disagreement.

● 567 578 596 614 There is confirmation for this. Where slaves are numerous and well organized, they may refuse to recognize the new fa and choose another from among the members of the community. They may even decide to give themselves to a foreign master on the pretext that the fa imposed upon them *by custom does not meet with their approval. This is a dis*aster which jeopardizes the wealth, strength, and even the unity of a family, for it can happen, in order to deal with the crisis, that a compromise is made which more or less ignores the regularly designated fa. This results in wrangling which usually ends with a schism in the community.

The history of these countries tells of many such cases, [177] because the slaves, upon becoming powerful, made the law in the families. The chronicle of Ségou thus relates that the slaves belonging to Dina Wara gave themselves to Biton upon the death of the former. It goes without saying that endless intrigues always precede such defections. The really successful fa, such as Biton, earned their reputations as able politicians and increased their fortunes precisely by their ability to avoid such disasters in their own communities, while stirring them up elsewhere.

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476 The patriarchal community draws its subsistence from
461 this agricultural exploitation, and as a result, a kind of work
● 567 organization has developed. Patriarchal communities or important families have agricultural land in various regions and these tracts are often far apart. Some members of the community or a group of slaves are therefore settled in each domain, sometimes on a permanent basis, sometimes for the period of clearing and cultivating the soil, sometimes for the period of harvest.

[361]

Theoretically, every member of the community and every slave must work for the community from dawn to around noon every day during the farming season. Two days, however, Monday and Thursday, are given to these persons for work in their own fields. Anyone who cannot or will not work has the right to provide a replacement from among his dependents.

There are, of course, many exceptions to these rules. In the first place, everyone works according to his position. Among the poor, the master works as hard as the slave, if not harder; among people in comfortable circumstances, the master merely controls and directs the work, sometimes reserving a particular job for himself. In important communities, field work [189] is almost exclusively the duty of the slaves, under the surveillance of their leaders and following the orders of the fa, who either supervises it himself or has a member of his entourage do so.

583 Conjugal usufruct. When she marries, a woman is given in
589 usufruct in exchange for the bride price. This usufruct is com-
768 munity property exactly like the things used for the bride price.

When a fa dies, the disposal of the conjugal usufruct included in the estate is a serious matter. Since the conjugal usufruct is of the same duration as the life of the woman, the death of the husband has no legal effect on the situation of his spouse. Since it is understood, however, that the widow has no sexual obligations to her husband's heirs, the usufruct is reduced in that respect. Such is the lot of widows when the heirs decide to keep them without marrying them and the women elect to remain.

583 Most often, however, the heirs either marry the widows
589 or send them home, or the women leave of their own volition.
768 An heir who marries a widow of the deceased must take
[587] her back to her family, obtain their consent, and pay them a new bride price, required because a new usufruct is involved. The chronicle of Ségou shows us how this custom operates. Upon the death of Dina Wara, his son escorted to Ségou his father's widow, Biton's sister, whom he wanted to marry. He made sumptuous gifts in order to obtain consent.

In the case of a widow who is sent home or who leaves of her own accord, responsibility for the bride price already paid rests with the party who broke the contract, i.e., with the person who sent the widow away or, if she left of her own accord, with her family. The question of responsibility for the bride price is an important one, since usually neither party has either the means or the desire to make it up. As a result, every effort is made to evade payment, and it is common practice to resort to the most shameless bargaining of the woman involved. A husband is sought who will agree to pay the bride price asked by the one having rights over her, but most often, partial payment will be made when the woman is returned, the creditor's impatience is calmed by gifts, and the balance of the bride price remains wholly or partly unpaid [190] at the time of the debtor's death. This obviously results in insolvable complications during and after the marriage (1).

1. Concerning the lot of widows, see the discussions about the widows of Biton and Ngolo in the chronicle of Ségou.

567 Slaves. Enslavement comes about in many ways, but the
727 three principal ones are force, birth, and the result of obligations.

Force has perhaps been the primary cause of enslavement. A person who surrenders is the chattel of the conqueror, but the treatment given him varies in accordance with his previous situation. Was he a man of position? If he is violent, he is killed or sold; if it is thought that his relatives will pay a high ransom, he is kept. If he is clever enough to arouse sympathy, he often is

567 well treated; if his captivity continues for a long time, he may
727 even found a family and live like a free man on parole, required only to remain where he is. Time takes care of many things. Under the same circumstances, a woman of quality usually becomes the wife of the conqueror.

People belonging to a caste escape slavery by entering the service of the conqueror to perform their customary trades.

It is only humble people -- the majority -- whose lot is often terrible; dragged far away, sold and resold, they often fall into the hands of bad masters.

567 Theoretically, a female slave's children are always slaves. A child born in slavery belongs to the mother's master and shares her fate. If she is the master's concubine, the child is born free and thereby frees the mother.

A contract slave is not always master of his own fate. Since the fa has absolute authority over his people, it is he who makes the contract which binds them.

[681] A free individual may fall into slavery as a result of his crimes or misdemeanors (2); it is in this way that an incorrigible

2. Nzan Fato became a slave for stealing a beehive (p. 49 above).

thief becomes the slave of the chief to whom he is sent for punishment.

Many poor people, attracted by the favored lot of the [191] wolo-so in large communities, go into voluntary slavery in hope of a comparable position. All the Sudanese empires had these voluntary slaves, who came in great numbers from all directions.

Where there are many slaves, they form what is called dyon'-kuru or dyon'-futu, depending on the place, that is, "an assembly of slaves," and their leader, who represents them with the master, is an important personage by virtue of their strength. When the community to which these slaves belong is an ancient one, they are divided into groups, each of which is named for the fa under whose authority it was organized. In theory, the leader of each group is its oldest member, and the leader of the

● 567 slaves (1). The master often keeps this paramount head near

1. This appears to be the application of a kind of right of seniority, analogous to that of primogeniture.

him as his confidential agent; otherwise, he buys a slave or selects a free man for this high post and thus better controls the situation. In such a case, the paramount leader recognized by the slaves is merely the spokesman for his congeners in their dealings with the master.

[304] Among the Kouloubali the wolo-so have a characteristic tattoo formed by three broad incisions from temple to lower jaw on both sides of the face. Far from feeling humiliated by this mark, every wolo-so is as proud of it as though it were a sign of noble origin. Many free men have adopted this tattoo in order to pose as members of the great Bambara family.

The status of a slave is not immutable, but generally includes three stages described by the following names: san'dyon', "a slave acquired through trade"; dyon'wolo-so, "slave born in the house"; and dyongoro, "freed."

A newly purchased slave is put under observation. If he appears to be intractable or vicious or is afflicted with a serious disease (epilepsy, Leprosy, sleeping sickness, nyctalopia), one gets rid of him as soon as possible.

If he proves to be docile, devoted, industrious, and a good worker, he is kept. He is given a job in the house or is [192] placed with an old servant to be trained or with an artisan to be taught a trade.

A female slave in the same circumstances who becomes a mother at once finds her situation improved (1). Her child is

1. The father's identity is of no importance, since the children all belong by law to her master.

wolo-so, "born in the house," and she acquires the same

● 567 status (2). The wolo-so is not usually sold or, more accurately,

2. It should be noted that there is an analogy here with the case of a concubine who becomes a mother; because her child by a free father is free, she becomes free ipso facto.

he will be disposed of only in the most desperate circumstances. The master's wealth and prosperity are dependent on the wolo-so.

Indeed, the wolo-so is a kind of member of the community; nothing happens in the community without his knowing it and participating in accordance with his position. It is true that he is required to work for the community, but no more nor less than any of the "poor people," and he often succeeds in establishing for himself a position that is considerably better than that of a child of the house. He and all of his dependents belong to the master, but barring the most serious circumstances, the master will not take anything away from him. On the contrary, the master furnishes him an enviable lot: he provides for his marriage and sets him up; he entrusts him with the management of property, often very valuable; and he treats him with a degree of affection not always displayed toward his own family because jealousy brings tensions and hatred between members of the community. Thus, the wolo-so often profits by his status rather than suffers from it.

Like the members of the community, he may exempt himself from the labor of the community by sending one of his children as a substitute and paying an annual fee in addition to certain services (3). If he is really prosperous -- and this is

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3. In general, the fee consists of a certain number of measures (moudd) of millet, approximately enough to feed an adult for a year. The services consist of work on the upkeep of buildings, repairs on the roofs and walls of the huts.

567 unlikely -- he may even own slaves himself and use them as substitutes.

Thus the relations between master and slave gradually become very different from what our European minds imagine. A master is bound to his wolo-so [193] by a thousand ties: he admits them to the cult; he marries their daughters; he circumcises their sons along with his own; and he allies himself with some of them by fraternization or an oath.

Even if he does not have such close contact, the wolo-so who is freed from labor, who perhaps lives at some distance or, if nearby, in virtual independence, is henceforth a dyongoro, that is, "freed." The link is not severed, and the freed man is a kind of relative. He is interested in everything that happens in his master's community and is present upon all important occasions, never coming with empty hands. Reciprocally, he is never treated like a stranger by the master. The master contributes to every event concerning him: he helps him get his sons married and established; on the occasion of the soli, he assembles his children along with his own, which gives them a degree of common solidarity.

The admission of the wolo-so to his master's community is shown publicly by the fact that the wolo-so bears the dyamu of his master.

It would be an exaggeration to claim that the house slave's situation is always so fortunate; it depends on many different factors (1).

> 1. A slave is seldom permitted to buy his freedom; the slave himself does not seek this redemption which would free only him and leave his family and most of his property in the hands of the master.

551 596 614 The dyamu. This is the name given to himself by the native, bestowed upon him by others, or inherited from his ancestors, but in any case one that has become such an honor that merely to pronounce it is enough to bring forth a show of homage toward one who bears it, for example, Kouloubali, Dyara, Dembélé, etc.

428 Now let us say the deceased was a fantan', that is, he did not exercise a faya. [219]

A son who dies before becoming fa rarely leaves any property. If he should by chance do so, such wealth theoretically belongs to the community of which he was a member. The disposition of property from special sources must be settled according to the nature of the source. Thus, property which the deceased may have inherited from his mother would go to his uterine heirs.

What has just been said of a son applies all the more to a daughter, since, after all, she is nothing more than a kind of property belonging to the community.

428 The most hapless fantan' is the slave. In principle, he could hardly be expected to leave an inheritance since even his ● 567 own person does not belong to him. In fact, however, the situation is quite different. A slave generally does have some property and may even be very rich. His fa allows him the use of his property for his lifetime, and it is current practice for him to leave it likewise to his children. As a result, everything transpires just as though the deceased were a free man, and what we have said about other communities applies to this type of community which, strictly speaking, has only a kind of de facto existence. The action of custom, in freeing the slave, gives him access to the position of a free man without depriving him of what his fa has allowed him to enjoy. In the end, this enjoyment of use is gradually transformed and strengthened by inheritance until it is the equivalent of similar rights to property which are accorded to men born free.

596 Order of succession. Patriarchal community. The fa
614 is the eldest of the surviving males who are direct descendants in the male line of the fa who founded the community.

428 Familial community. 1. The eldest surviving son of the
596 deceased; upon his death, succession follows the same pattern as for the patriarchal community.
614 If there are only daughters, the property is divided among them.

428 2. If there are no children, the collateral males and,
596 lacking them, ~~the wives~~.
3. If there are no collateral relatives, the ascendants.
614 4. If there are no ascendants, the surviving spouse.
5. If there is no surviving spouse, escheat occurs: [220] the inheritance reverts to the head of the settlement, the dugutigi, when this settlement is independent; otherwise to the head of the clan, the fama.

596 The community and the individual. The result of the
614 foregoing is that the individual, whoever he may be and whatever his situation, has no value except as a member of a community (1); it is the community that exists and has an identity,

●[567] 1. A slave has no rights because, as a person, he belongs to no community.

while the individual exists and is identified only through the community and for the community.

An individual who exists apart from any faya is, therefore, an anomaly, and this situation comes to an end as soon as the individual himself becomes fa.

596 There are cases, however, when an individual is put out
614 of his community because of his own action or because of circumstances, and extraordinary changes of status result.
626 Anyone driven from his community for bad conduct loses his rights to the faya in that community.

564 If his disqualification results from the practice of a trade
558 regarded as degrading, he falls into what the Bambara call nyama-ka-la and Europeans call "people of caste." Henceforth he is not only excluded from his community, but he lives apart from all persons not declassed; he is a free man of inferior standing. He usually lives under the protection of a community of persons not declassed, earning his living from it and deriving from it such consideration as may be sometimes given him.

564 Among the Bambara, the nyama-ka-la include: the
463 numu, blacksmiths, whose wives are usually potters; the loro, who work with copper; the garanke, who work leather; and the kule, who work with wood and are sometimes saddlers.

564 engage only in agriculture. Furthermore, casual or temporary practice, in one's own home, for instance, of one of the reputedly menial trades is not considered degrading.

567 Theoretically, enslavement does not exclude an individual from his own community nor in any way demean him in relation to it (1); if he returns, he recovers his rights just as
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1. For example, Déssé-Koro, taken in captivity to Ségou, returned to Kaarta where he exercised the faya of the Massa-si.

though he had never been away.

On the other hand, at the place where he is a slave, an individual belongs to no community (as a person), and that is why he has no rights and is treated as a chattel.

567 We have shown earlier how, aided by time and circumstances, a slave may manage to escape some of the limitations of his status, but strictly speaking, [222] he can never escape this status. If in fact, as the chronicle says of Ngolo Dyara, a slave succeeds in attaining a position whose importance would seem to obliterate the stigma of servitude, the blemish of slavery nevertheless remains indelible.

4. Relations between Communities

596 The true social unit is the community. Even when no
614 special organization links them, communities are often linked
621 by numerous bonds. This involves no distinction by race, incidentally, since more often than not ethnically diverse peoples live together in the same region.

These bonds between communities may be classified under two heads: kinship and alliance.

Kinship

[602] The influence of kinship is very extensive. Thus, a single patriarchal community includes the familial communities

*173 Henceforth, the fama in the furu-ba was no more than primus inter pares, just like the ton'-tigi in the old fla-n-ton', taking into consideration the evolution by which the furu-ba developed from the fla-n-ton'.

Ngolo Dyara succeeded only in making the office of fama, thus understood, hereditary for his descendants, just as had been done with many positions of dyon'-kuntigi before his time.

This progressive consolidation of an ever increasing number of high offices and the de facto independence regained by most of the members of the clan resulted in the formation of a society whose members took pride in their ton'-dyon' origins, considered themselves free, and even regarded themselves as free men of rank. This is perhaps the essential role of slavery in these areas, as a channel of social renovation and ethnic fusion.

It is appropriate to close this survey by an analysis of the various components of the clan and an explanation of their functions.

Furu-ba dyon' and Ton'-dyon'

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•567 In the course of time, the organization and function of the furu-ba created by Mamari underwent various modifications.

The essential element of the clan is the ton'-dyon', because after all everything depends on it. We have learned the origin of the ton'-dyon' above. The number of slaves of the furu-ba was increased by the many captives taken in the course of raids, pillaging, and warfare, but the ton'-dyon' is an aristocracy within the furu-ba-dyon' by virtue of seniority and also because some of the characteristics [300] of free men have somehow survived in those of the ton'-dyon' who were originally ton'-den'.

Undoubtedly one of the causes of the unrest that always stirs up the furu-ba is this deep yearning everyone has for freedom. They do not know how to attain it, however, first because they are dominated by an ancient atavism for servitude that burdens all the Sudanese, and also because each man who desires freedom for himself intends to use it to enslave his brothers. These are the confused feelings that give such an equivocal aspect to all the events related in the chronicle.

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567 The ton'-dyon' of the furu-ba is a kind of person of caste: he cannot cease to be ton'-dyon', and his children will live and die as ton'-dyon'. He is subject to the despotic authority of the fama. For a free man, it is certainly a fall to become a ton'-dyon', but for a slave, on the contrary, it is an improvement in status. Among the ton'-dyon' there are all sorts of people; this was the case in the beginning and has continued to be so as time passed. Although slaves obtained from armed forays were an [727] important element in the totality of the ton'-dyon', there were undoubtedly many men, free but poor, who were glad to join the ton'-dyon' so as to protect themselves from the depredations of these hardly commendable persons and also to gain the right of using the same procedures themselves.

Among the ton'-dyon', therefore, there are people of all races and all conditions; indeed, this is so true that all the dyamu are mingled under this common label.

Within the furu-ba, the ton'-dyon' formed a category apart and always retained the prerogatives which in native society accompany seniority. The ton'-dyon' were the "elders." Prisoners reduced to slavery formed the furu-ba-dyon', properly speaking, and they were grouped in series, each taking its origin from the fama who organized it. There they followed the usual path. Barring favorable circumstances which might allow them to escape the wretchedness of the early days of captivity, they started out as members of the gang of slaves-of-all-work, often considered as a kind of medium of exchange and for that reason called san'-dyon'-u (slaves of exchange). Once they were adopted by a community, a woman acquired the status [301] of wolo-so when she bore a child, while a man might achieve comparable status by gaining the confidence of his masters.

The wolo-so became a dyongoron when he was in a position to send his children to work in his place and to pay an annual fee.

Once he reached the status of wolo-so, the slave became, in actual fact, a person of caste. In principle, he could not be sold, he had the right of ownership, and he could leave property to his children. Indeed, he was often better off than a man who was free but poor.

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567 The status of this caste-slave carried over to his descendants ad infinitum, even in the case of those persons who rose to the highest positions. Thus, the Dyara of the family of Ngolo Dyara kept the stigma attached to the servile status of their ancestor (1). In practice, the wishes of an all-powerful master

1. See Raffenel, Vol. 1, p. 371.

could change the status of those under his authority since, as we have seen, the fa made the law. However, this arbitrary will did not leave a man without recourse, as we saw in the chronicle in the case of the aforesaid Ngolo in his relations with Mamari. If one could appeal to the good offices of someone close to the fa, it was often possible to make him change his mind.

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631 The furu-ba dyon' (ton'-dyon' or furu-ba dyon', properly speaking) were under the orders of "chiefs of slaves" (dyon'-kuntigi-u). There are supposed to have been 120 of these chiefdoms under Ma-n-son, according to the words attributed to Tonmassa in the chronicle. According to the same source, the number rose to 140, and then Ma-n-son reduced the number to 60 hereditary posts with authority over a varying number of furu-ba dyon' who were scattered about in the various regions subject to the clan, the whole subservient to the decision of the fama. The chronicle shows us how the fama established or broke up these chiefdoms for the greatest variety of reasons. Whenever he had an enemy who needed watching, an attack to be prepared, a country to be exploited, or a service to be organized, he conscripted men wherever he liked, ordered whole populations to move, and appointed a chief to take command of the enterprise and to carry out his orders, whenever and however he wished.

Among the dyon'-kuntigi there was a hierarchy [302] based on seniority theoretically and also on the importance of the duties; as a result, some of them were great chiefs. One of these, called the ton'-masa, came to be the supreme chief over the ton'-dyon in particular and all the furu-ba dyon' in general. In the fla-n-ton' the ton'-masa had the duty of convening the ton'-den' and of watching the ton'-dyon' to see that they

614 dyon'-kuntigi should replace them; the dyon'-kuntigi always
*173 exercised an influence over the ton'-dyon' for whom they acted as spokesmen. Besides it was easy to convene the dyon'-kuntigi, and as their experience increased, they came to be competent and tried collaborators for the fama.

As time went on, however, the council was neglected. The extension of the to-da kept the important dyon'-kuntigi away from Ségou, and as a result the fama became increasingly despotic. He was always sensitive, however, to the influence of his immediate circle, that is, the people of his house (his mother, wives, children, brothers, and other relatives) and
● [567] especially his familiars (1). The latter constituted a kind of

1. So it was that in his fratricidal quarrel with Nyana-n-Koro, it is clearly apparent that Ma-n-son was guided by the shrewd suggestions of Nzan-fato; in his quarrel with Souleyman, his intimates were his advisers.

privy council in which the leader of the slaves, whether [310] or not he belonged to the ton'-dyon', played an important role. Ordinarily these familiars were of lowly birth: people of caste or domestic servants in the house of the fama. Deeply involved in their master's life, they were at the root of the intrigues surrounding him.

The fama realized that his authority was deprived of its strength when he lost contact with the ton'-dyon', because a clan languishes almost to the point of extinction when those who compose it lose touch with one another. Therefore, the fama would convene the assembly, not, as in the past, in order to learn its wishes, but rather to request or even require from it a solemn affirmation of loyalty before the idols. In any case, the assembly always met at least once a year to renew the oath of religious faith and to admit the "young men."

[578] The assembly took an effective role only at the election of a new fama, and it is plain that over the years this power of

614 religious and reciprocal oath. Their contribution entitled them
701 to a share of the booty. Volunteers, who enlisted for an engagement or a whole campaign, came in under conditions settled in advance.

The fama furnished the allies, just as he did the volunteers, with whatever they needed and deducted the amount from their share of the loot. Sometimes a third party, not involved in the expedition, provided mounts, equipment, and weapons for the enterprise in exchange for a prearranged reward.

In short, armed pillage was a business directed by the fama, who could admit interested participants if he so desired. If the operation were successful, the clan gained predominance over
[727] the conquered regions, which the fama then exploited as he saw fit. The booty was the first result of the enterprise, and it served both to pay the expenses incurred in the affair and to swell the treasury of the clan.

This explains why the clan's army, for a consideration, hired itself out to anyone who asked for support, as an ally, as a mercenary force, or in any other capacity. The army might simply intervene in a quarrel of its own accord when there seemed to be profit to be gained (1). [313]

1. See below how the fama of Ségou lent his support to a marabout of Sous. The Bambara also intervened on numerous occasions in the internal quarrels of Khasso, Boundou, Fouta, etc. Their role as mercenaries is clearly shown in the Tarikh es Soudan.

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701 The ton'-dyon' were distinguished by a special hair ar-
● 569 rangement. Their heads were completely shaved except for three
[302] tufts of hair which formed two braids on the crown of the head and one at the nape of the neck.

The slaves of the household of the fama could be recognized by their well-known tattoo (1) which consisted of three

[304]

1. In general, it is risky to depend

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incautiously on tattooing as a distinguishing mark of race or even of rank; the tattoo described here has not only been used by people of various origins, but has even been appropriated by all kinds of people as a form of snobbishness.

parallel cuts from temple to lower jaw on either side of the face. Furthermore, these people borrowed the dyamu of the fama (Kouloubali, Dyara, etc.), just as certain servants in some of the French provinces are called by their master's name because they are members of the household bearing that name.

614 701 411 The elite troops (sofa, ton'-dyon', etc.) were armed with axes (sukala) (2). Important chiefs also had axes, the insignia of

2. An instrument's name derived from suka, a variant of sua, meaning "to pierce." The men armed with axes were, in fact, assigned the special task of "making a breach" in the wall inclosing the settlement under attack.

command, sometimes made of precious metal, such as copper or silver. The axe carried by the fama was made of gold and enchased (3).

3. The chronicle relates that Tonmassa, after murdering Dékoro, carried off the golden axe, the symbol of supreme command.

The spear (tama) was often regarded as a weapon of distinction also. The ordinary warriors were armed with bows (kala) and arrows (bimye), the latter usually poisoned.

[177] Guns (marfa) gradually came into use, imported by native traders (Dyula). The chronicle claims that the first firearms were introduced among "the people of Ségou" in Mamari's time by an army from Kong and that these guns were of the blunderbuss type.

766 614 White oxen are sacrificed on the tomb; their hides are used to make new drumheads for the tabala, and the meat [328] is offered to the manes of the deceased and then distributed among members of the family, allies, familiars, etc. The women wail, weep, and sing the praises of the deceased in company with the people of caste who organize everything. Outside, [786] banquets and virtual orgies, complete with noisy dances and songs, are organized in honor of the deceased.

This ceremony goes on for seven days.

614 At the close of this period, the new fama is publicly proclaimed. For this purpose, the leader of the slaves has the walled-up door of the tata reopened, and the whole company assembles in the large open area in front of the house of the fama. Those present include the newly elected fama, the members of the family of the Massa-si, allies, tributaries, heads of the ton'-dyon', and the sofa.

[769] [782] An ox has been sacrificed and offered to the manes of the defunct. Its hide is stretched in the center of an open area surrounded by the crowd, and on it is spread out the sheepskin, adorned with precious amulets, which has long served as a rug for the fama of the Massa-si. Other precious family relics include [301] the scarlet cap adorned with amulets, twists of gold for the ears, and heavy silver bracelets.

The representative of the family of Kassi Konaré seats the newly elected fama on the sheepskin, puts the scarlet cap on his head, and adorns him with the gold earrings and silver bracelets. Then he makes a speech to the new fama, outlining the policies followed by his deceased predecessor and enumerating the desiderata of the people of the clan.

● [567] At this point the leader of the slaves prostrates himself before the new fama and places himself in his hands to show that all the ton'-dyon' are loyal to him. He then presents individually the principal groups of slaves, tributaries, etc.

Another ceremony brings the new fama, prominent Massa-si, their allies, the principal leaders of the slaves, and the tributaries to the wood sacred to the protective idol of the clan, where a reciprocal oath of loyalty is taken. A ritual communion follows.

771 Incidentally, this "manner" possesses, under some cir-
777 cumstances, advantages which encourage adhesion to Islam.
Slaves belonging to true Moslem believers do well to give clear
● [567] evidence of their new faith if they wish to obtain their freedom.
Ngolo made use of this means according to the chronicle of
Ségou.

Women and, in general, the "weak people" often claim conversion -- only rarely deep or sincere -- in order to escape from the arbitrary and rigorous nature of the custom governing them.

2. The agents of Islam

797 As regards the people with whom we are here concerned, it can be said that the center, which directly or indirectly has [338] had the greatest influence in spreading Islam, is the city of Dia (1).

1. A city on the left bank of the Niger, in the present-day province of Macina..

Dia is certainly the oldest metropolis of Islam in western Sudan, but this was an accommodating kind of Islam, which compromised easily with native customs and gave a large role to magic.

"The characteristic of the marabouts of Dia is their scarcely disguised tendency to rely on Islamic magic. The city has always been considered the great center for the production of amulets in the valley of the Middle Niger" (Marty, Études sur l'Islam et les tribus du Soudan [Studies on Islam and the tribes of the Sudan] Vol. 4).

These marabouts belong to very diverse races, but those of the Marka are dominant and with them should be considered their confreres, the Bozo, on whose training the Marka have always exerted a preponderant influence. The Somono marabouts usually come from one or the other of these two races.

All of them are linked in one way or another with high priests from Moorish or Peul Islam and, through them or their emissaries, are allied with one or another of the brotherhoods.

175 at Ségou. Bénéfali had the wisdom to avoid a conflict, but his brother, Foulakoro, who took the throne in 1745, was less happily inspired and was crushed in 1754 by Mamari Koulibali.

[47] C. Mamari Koulibali

Here is the veritable creator of the kingdom of Ségou, one of those powerful personalities who crop up from time to time in the Black anarchy, such as a Soundiata or a Sonni Ali. He represents the moment of maximum expansion of the Peul-Bambara conglomerate which was formed in the seventeenth century by interbreeding of the Bambara mass with the feudal Peul from the east.

Mamari Koulibali was essentially a war leader, and the great events of his reign were military events. He subjugated local chiefs; with aid of the Peul he repulsed the assault launched against Ségou by the powerful king of Kong (1725); he liber[illegible]ed the country from the suzerainty of the Soninké Boaré and took their capital, Kirango (1740); finally, solicited by the Soninké of Mourdiah, he destroyed Sounsana, capital of the brother kingdom of the descendants of Niangolo. He killed their chief, Foulakoro (1754), and unified all the Bambara of the Niger Valley. Having assembled a redoubtable army, which he even endowed with a fleet and a corps of engineers, he was able to impose his sovereignty on the Peul kingdom of Macina and may even have menanced Timbuktu. It was during the course of his reign that one sees an important evolution in the structure of Bambara society.

D. Reforms of Mamari Koulibali

175 567 It was in taking into account the role of slaves in the army that Mamari Koulibali was to revolutionize the ancestral society (see the traditional social organization).

He managed, first of all, to take away the greatest number of men, free or slaves, from their family community, in order to make of them Ton-dyon (slaves of the ton [ton is the largest unit of social organization]. To do this, he used the following methods: when a criminal was condemned to a fine, Mamari paid it; if a man was condemned to death, Mamari pardoned him; when one of his subjects could not pay his taxes, Mamari freed him of his debt on condition that the man put himself or one of his sons at the disposition of the

175 sovereign. In all cases the man, although pardoned, was deprived
567 of his personal liberty and became the emperor's chattel.

Mamari next wished to assure himself of the personal fidelity
575 of his Ton-dyon by enrolling them in cults dedicated to hisuperson. Thus, the old ton was transformed into a brotherhood with Mamari as both political and religious chief. In this way he was able to replace the political anarchy and social structure of the old Bambara regime by a new organization, despotic, very efficient militarily when fully controlled by the chief, but sometimes very dangerous to the stability of the country, as soon was seen.

E. Successors of Mamari

175 Mamari's son, Denkoro (1755-57), was to be the first victim of this all-powerful army. Exasperated by his cruelties, the military chiefs assassinated him and replaced him by his brother, Ali.[48] A Moslem, Ali wanted to propagate Islam and to forbid the use of fermented beverages and the worship of spirits. The Ton-dyon chiefs then massacred Ali and all of the Koulibali family, except two girls who were saved by one of the chiefs, N'Golo Diara. Different chiefs then contended for power: Ton-Mansa, then Kaniouba-Niouma, then Kafa-Diougou, who, all of them, reigned merely a short while before dying a violent death. Finally, N'Golo Diara, descendant of a great family who had become enslaved to Mamari and who, as we have seen, saved his daughters and then married one of them, re-established order, moved the capital to Ségou-Sikoro, and resumed the work of the great Tigi-ton.

In the course of his long reign, (1766-90), N'Golo knew how to make himself respected and loved by his subjects and how to impose his will elsewhere; he established his authority over the Macina region, the Sokolo region, at Diénné, and Timbuktu. He only failed against the Mossi of Yatenga.

Meanwhile, the elder branch of the Koulibali family, crushed by Mamari in 1754 and chased from Bélédougou, rose again. If the successors of the unfortunate Foulakoro, Sey Bamana and Deni Babo, were nothing more than pillaging chiefs raiding at Kaarta, Bélédougou, and Khasso, Sira Bo did establish a stable kingdom with Guémou as capital. His successor, Dessé Koulibali (1788-99) even believed himself strong enough to impose his suzerainty on the Bambara of Ségou.

596 The fa. -- The whole of this family obeys the same head: the fa. The fa is designated by a council of elders when he fulfills the following conditions: first, not to refuse the faya and to be a member of the community, that is, actually to live within the community; next, he must never have been a slave, and he must not have settled abroad without hoping to return home. In addition, he must be a legitimate child, that is to say, born in wedlock, and the firstborn. In principle, the faya passes from older to younger brother (in the classificatory sense of the term). Thus, the fa is always the member of each generation closest to the ancestor. Finally, the fa must be able, that is, healthy, active, and a good administrator. Often the fa designates his successor before his death. The successor may assume power only 40 days after the death of the last fa, and after being recognized as head of the family by the assembly of elders. From that moment on, he exercises his functions, come what may.

The fa has charge of, and the moral and physical responsibility for, the whole community. He directs and protects all the members of the family. These latter can escape his authority only by leaving the village for good; they are then considered to be dead members. (The descendants of the fa by his daughters are outside of the community; they belong to the patriarchal communities of their respective fathers.)

The fa, head of the family, lives under the administrative dependence of the head of the village.

2. From Family to Community

621 The true social unit is the community. Ties of kinship and marriage unite groups without racial or ethnic unity.

622 a. Patriarchal Organization of the "Ton." -- All the family heads obey a village head: it is on him that the responsibility falls for the organization of the community territory, as well as the responsibility for administering justice when contention arises between followers of different faya. The village chief is generally master of the land: dugu-kolo-tigi; sometimes [54] he cedes his rights to a village administrative chief younger than himself, but in matters of religion he remains all-powerful, and each year he receives gifts from the different family heads for the needs of the common cult. He also

642
565 3. the free men;

4. people of caste, such as blacksmiths, etc. (see below);

5. slaves.

567 e. Slavery. -- A man became a slave in three ways: by violence, by obligation, or by birth.

567 1. By violence. If a war captive is important, he may be
727 killed or he may be held for ransom and treated with consideration.
554 A Fama captured in war could become an army chief or dignitary in the country of his captor and could found a family there. In no case could he be reduced to captivity on his own territory.

[60] If the vanquished is a man of caste, he is spared captivity and generally enters the service of the conquering Fama;
[608] if he is a sénanku of the victor, the latter gets rid of him by freeing him. Finally, if the captive has the same name as the victorious
[561] Fama, he is freed, because he is recognized as being a relative of the Fama.

When the captive is a free man of humble origin, he is sold by the Fama, unless the Fama gives him to his warriors.

567 2. By obligation. A free individual became a slave in
681 punishment for his crimes or misdemeanors; he was then sold for the
426 profit of the Fama. A fa could sell one of his children to meet his
858 debts, but he subsequently had to try to buy him back once he was freed of his obligations.

567 3. By birth. A woman slave bears only slaves. The slave born in the house is called a wolo-so. If a woman slave is got with child by a free man, she becomes free, as does her child. But if the mother is repudiated, she reverts to slavery, while the child remains free.

567 As the number of slaves grew, their organization became
644 complicated and hierarchic. The slaves under the Fama of Ségou were divided into series, each having as chief the eldest of the slaves. The eldest of these chiefs became chief of the dyon-kuru or dyon-futu (ensemble of slaves). Monteil shows the important role this slave chief has played in the history of Ségou. In fact, he was the spokesman for all the grievances of the slaves and often became the Fama's adviser. At the death of the Fama, the slave chief confirmed the power of his successor by assuring him or refusing him, the submission of all the slaves.

him, the submission of all the slaves.

The fa particularly displays his confidence in the wolo-so. He arranges his marriage, establishes him in life, admits him to his cult, and assigns him important tasks. Sometimes he marries his daughter and unites himself to him by fraternization and the oath. Children of the wolo-so are often circumcised with those of the master. Finally, the wolo-so bears his master's name and may in turn have slaves. At the third generation, the wolo-so becomes a free man. We still have very incomplete knowledge of this whole question of slavery, which incontestably exists throughout the whole Sudan; politically, it seems to have been a rational method of assimilating and fusing into a single people men of the most diverse origins.

f. The Army. -- Since the slaves were not pariahs, but, because of their number and the roles they filled, are important members of the society, it is normal that they also participated in the defense of the society. They have, therefore, their place in the army.

Each Fama had an army, whose object was pillage, to procure the greatest possible amount of material goods for his subjects. The Fama despoiled those captives whom he enslaved, while others paid him tribute according to consecutive agreement. Ranged in battle, the army included the following components.

1. A central mass, disi (chest), made up of the corps of sofa (etymologically: those in charge of the care of the horses). The sofa formed the personal guard of the Fama; they were often recruited [61] from among young prisoners of war. The Fama often presided over the ceremony of circumcision of the children of the conquered whom he mixed in with his own children; they were thus bound and devoted to each other all their lives. The young sofa played the role of pages and grooms; the older ones became the trusted aides of the Fama, who charged them with important missions.

2. Two masses flanked the disi, to right and left: the kini-n-bolo (right arm) and the numa-n-bolo (left arm). These bolo were composed of furuba-dyon (age class of slaves corresponding to the flanton of the free men), and commanded by the ton-dyon (a sort of aristocracy of the slaves recruited from among the war prisoners).

567 701 3. The ton-koro-bolo behind the disi is a special reserve formed entirely of pure ton-dyon.

4. The keli-tigi was the chief of the expedition, designated by the Fama. He might be a dyon-kuntigi (chief of the furuba-dyon), a member of the Fama's community, or the Fama himself.

708 534 Finally, the army was accompanied by a musical corps, composed essentially of drums which transmitted messages. There were armpit drums (dunkan'), shoulder drums (taura), three-legged drums (dange), drums carried by two men (tabala), and coupled drums (denuba). Often horns (buru) were added, sometimes small horns made of ivory or horn, and sometimes xylophones (bada) and cowbells.

708 537 A dyeli (griot) follows the expedition to observe the exploits that he must retransmit; he must encourage the warriors and dispel panic by the power of his oratory.

B. Influence of Social Organization on Economic Life

a. The ton, Work Community

621 We have seen that the social unit among the Bambara is the community. The community is also the work unit and the economic unit. The independent individual is not conceived of. The community owns all the wealth which makes up the spiritual and material patrimony: the land, the agricultural, industrial, and commercial products, the habitations ...

423 621 622 609 [431] The community regulates the exploitation of the land. The dugu-tigi is the first occupant, master of the land, of which he distributes the lots to the different family heads. When a stranger, a family head, wants to enter into a community, he chooses an unoccupied field and asks the village chief for it. The request is accompanied by ten kola nuts and a chicken. Authorization cannot then be refused. The chief of the land sacrifices the chicken before the entire community and informs it of the installation of the newcomer. When the stranger wants to leave the land, he is given back his chicken and kola nuts.

423 621 622 Land assigned to a family head may always be taken back from him without justification by the dugu-tigi and his council.

241 462 [411] [401] After the men have cleared the big weeds, the women come along to finish up. At harvest time, the women and children chase the birds from the fields with loud cries, sling shots, and by heating bamboo on a hard rock to cause a detonation. All chase the sparrows, partridges, guinea-fowls ... Harvesting is done together ...

In addition, by the side of the men's fields there are little women's fields where the women cultivate sorrel, okra, eggplant, tomatoes, beans, and all the condiments. The accessory crops of the women are the raro, bananas, manioc, sometimes rice or peanuts (1).

1. Labouret, Paysans noirs [Black Peasants].

241 565 567 Naturally, the work varies according to the social order. The Bambara divide themselves into free men, people of caste, and, formerly, slaves, all having a chief at their head. All members of the community must work the land; in fact, the poor work more than the slaves. The more fortunate do little work; they formerly directed and controlled the work of the slaves, today that of the agricultural workers.

C. Legal Procedure: Inheritance, Land Ownership

692 In Bambara country today, as in all of French West Africa, justice is dispensed by two tribunals: that presided over by a justice of the peace for important affairs, and that presided over by the administrator for other cases. The justice of the peace renders justice following the French code; the administrator according to local custom. A chamber of the Court of Appeals of Dakar is represented at Bamako, whose jurisdiction includes the Sudan and Niger territories. The Assize Court holds a session at Bamako, which also possesses an inferior court. Justices of the peace of wide jurisdiction are found at Kayes, Gao, Mopti, Ségou, Sikasso, Bougouni; other justices of the peace with wide jurisdiction have been created and will soon take up their functions.

One easily imagines the conflicts of principles and method which may arise between the two sorts of tribunals have just indicated.

689 Public violation of decency is punished by death.

684 For adultery, the man is put in irons and pays a fine, the woman is whipped by her husband, her brothers, or the Fama's police. Relations with a woman in mourning draws public scorn on the guilty, while a man who commits adultery with a pregnant woman is put to death. A captive who is the lover of his master's wife is put to death.

689 Vagrant individuals are presumed to be escaped captives and are handed over to the Fama.

735 Finally, begging is authorized, because, say the Bambara, it is better to have begging than stealing.

d. Responsibility

[608] The Fama judges all his subjects, except his own sénanku whom
672 he has judged by his tribunal. The law is applicable to every circumcised man and excised woman recognized as sane. (The demented are put in irons.) They are responsible for their acts, but the family of the guilty is also responsible. The father of an uncircumcised boy is responsible for the boy's acts, the husband for the acts of his wife, and we have seen that a man's crime may lead to the punishment of his whole family. Let us further remark that a
●567 master was judge of his slave, but when a difference arose between
692 slaves of different houses, their case was referred to the tribunal. The tribunal also weighed the death penalty [72] when a slave committed a grave fault. Finally, the foreigner who lives in the Bam-
[609] bara country is judged by Bambara laws.

672 We must also note that the penalties apply to all crimes committed voluntarily; every infraction or damage involuntarily committed is excusable on the condition that it be immediately confessed. Thus it is that a hunter meeting a pair of lovers in the
[684] bush may kill them for outraging public decency, but must admit his crime immediately upon returning to the village.

e. Inheritance

428 Monteil has noticed an order of succession in the Ségou region which does not correspond to that described by other authors, such as Ortoli or Aubert. In fact, at the death of the fa, " ... everything that belonged to him remains undivided under the new faya of

that period; his body will not be buried but will be carried off by members of the Komo, who will take it to a crossroads and crush it with the aid of komo-se-w [sic]. The remains will be hidden in a secret place. The same treatment is accorded to the komo-tigi who dies during his seven-year term.

The cult is cantonal, and the various komo-tigi take their orders from their colleagues of the capital. The cult formerly was interican and intertribal. Labouret (Les Mandingues et leur langue [The Mandingo and Their Language]) has made a table of the seven categories of persons who make up the hierarchical society of the initiates.

After initiation into the Komo cult, a natural sequel to circumcision, the young man may, if he so desires, be initiated into other cults. He then enters a powerful spiritual family which unites all its members by ties of brotherhood. This brotherhood is superimposed on the normal social hierarchy of the flã̃-tõ̃ [this term is probably the same as flanton]. The chief of the brotherhood is entitled nyama-tigi; he is generally a man of caste or a slave. He acquires his position as chief either by inheriting it, by election, or by founding a new cult. To do this latter, he must buy an altar, gna, from the village or from the brotherhood that already possesses this cult. Such a purchase is considered a marriage with the gna and is accompanied by drinking. The higher-ranking initiates (dyenfaw: masters of the truth) are auxiliaries of the nyama-tigi and participate in the oracle, wara-da. All the initiates are more or less divine. The clergy includes, in addition, a sacrificer, muru-kala-tigi, and a dyeli, herald of the god. To become one of the faithful, one must pay an entrance fee and swear an oath of secrecy, obedience, and fellowship. The clergy manages the cult's treasury which is fed by the entrance fees to the brotherhood, by fees levied for a class promotion, by contributions required for the major ceremonies, and by fines imposed on the members.

The brotherhood is a spiritual family which is organized in a fashion similar to the natural filiation of the community. The nyama-tigi plays the role of the fa; the dyen-fa-w and the notable members form a sort of council for settling, with the chief, all questions. The cult does nothing on Mondays and Thursdays, the work holidays.

771 "believe or die" of the Moslems by taking up their spears, and when
798 they were conquered, reduced to servitude, and unable to continue
778 their worship openly, they remained true to the faith they received from their ancestors. Severed heads became the prey of vultures, and spilled blood flowed, but those that survived only became hardened. The Moslem conquerors, tired of striking and in need of slaves and manpower, had to admit their defeat in the field of religion.

Some fell away from the idols (slaves, and some rich people seeking to safeguard their lives and possessions), but their apostasy was strictly external and a lie, for they shouted the formula but in secret devoted themselves to their bloody rites, imbuing their children with their own faith and not that of their masters. A lie has never [577] been difficult for the Bambara; to know how to lie is for them more than half a virtue. Thus, when the right to freedom was proclaimed [567] in 1907, I was not at all surprised to see that out of nearly 5,000 slaves who spontaneously set themselves free, the majority returned to their homes or to the land of their fathers, forgot the formula, and declared themselves to be fetishists. They did not get initiated then since they already had been (1).

1. Those who took back their own freedom in 1907 were all slaves of the Moslems. The "Peulls" /Fulani/, a shepherd people, saw almost all their slaves escape. The Bambara in slavery kept their traditions as well as they could; in the Negro village of Biskra I found sons of the Bambara who did not know their own language and were fanatical Moslems, yet kept their tattoos, sacrificed to the family boli handed down by their fathers, danced the dance of the korodouga, and used the Bambara formulas and songs although they no longer understood them.

684 however, because the Negroes say that although the betrothed girl
836 does not belong entirely to herself, neither does she belong entirely to her fiancé; she still retains certain rights to her own person, "à ma di ban, she has not yet been given."

When a girl becomes pregnant, she is arraigned before the
684 family council. After a goat has been slaughtered for the family boli,
627 she is asked the name of her partner, and if she refuses to disclose it the council of the elders is called in. She has to yield, otherwise she is tied to one of the forked sticks that support the flat terrace roof, and blows rain thick on her back.

As soon as the guilty man is named, she swears on a powerful boli (1) that she has told the truth, and the man is summoned.

1. It is almost always a Komo, a Nama, or a Kono.

Nothing is to be gained by being a perjurer; it is better to pay the fine and live. The stain on his honor is slight, and he confesses without much shame: "Tigné (that is true); né no do (it is my fault)."

The fine is between 15 and 20 francs and often between 25 and 30 francs (2), not including the sacrifice to the boli, which con-

[583] 2. The rule is that the culprit should pay the fiancé the entire bride price, or some 30 francs.

sists of two hens, two dogs, a goat, and two kola nuts. Quite often the injured fiancé has to be satisfied with the victims for the sacrifice and a small present, one to two kilos of salt, and 800 to 1, 600 cowrie shells, or 1 to 2 francs. As for the child of an unmarried mother, its
847 fate is in the hands of the grandmothers, and of the father and the
848 mother, and it quite often happens that it does not cry twice in this
• 567 world; to use the Bambara expression: "N'a kasira, a t'na foula ké, if he has cried, he will not do it a second time." I am speaking here of a free girl, for the child of an unmarried slave girl is welcome; it is a gain for the house, and no attention is paid to the guilty man. This is easy to understand, for is there a Negro who does not abuse his slave?

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1. Sometimes this exhibition is made before the arrival of the young bride.

The shoes with soles three fingers thick, the white blouse and the loincloth that the bride wears, together with the koundougou fini, a huge piece of cloth that can yield three or four loincloths, are a gift from the husband; the rest -- cloth, gourds, pottery, mortars for grinding millet, cotton to be carded and spun, all come to her from her family. The size of the trousseau depends a little on the family's fortune, but as a general rule it can be stated that at her marriage every young woman receives some ten tafé (pieces of cloth, one and a half to two meters long by one meter wide, which the women wind around their bodies), some 15 gourds, and for ornaments at least a bracelet and a bead necklace (2). One is sometimes present at

[556 567]

2. Brides from rich families receive a slave called gouadani to do the cooking, as well as a cow, small chains for their feet, bracelets, a bead necklace with a piece of amber the size of a hen's egg, and two small gold earrings.

hilarious scenes, for among the crowd of the curious that press around, there are inevitably some rejected suitors. They have put aside hatred and rancour, for the boli of the village protects her. Yet they love her; deep in their hearts they keep all their love for her, and it is certainly they, the wounded ones, who take her free hand and pour onto her knees a few handfuls of cowrie shells.

When the vainglorious exhibition of the trousseau is finished, the fourouboloma tigi or the guardian of the wedding presents, gives the mistress of song 5 kémé, or 400 cowrie shells, and the guns are fired one last time. The young bride gets up at once, her platter of grass still over her face, and gliding with her heels on the ground, not lifting her feet, she goes into her dwelling followed by two or three matrons, and then she disappears in a light cloud of dust. The crowd withdraws, for to follow her or even to stay where they are would be indiscreet.

4: Henry--254 M-5 (ca. 1900) 1910 FA8 Bambara FA8

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1. A bonded person works for his food, just like a slave. His condition is worse than that of the slave, for in addition to his food, the latter receives a bit of cloth to cover himself, but the bonded person does not. A slave can ransom himself for a sum varying between 100 and 200 francs, and at present he can escape without fear of being pursued and without paying anything at all. A bonded person must pay the amount of his bond to the last cowrie shell, whether he escapes or not. There are Negroes who, for a certain amount, will give you one of their children for one or two years. These children are not paid since the amount has already been paid, but besides food they get clothing and some gratuities beyond the payment for their work. Lacking the proper words, the Bambara call this also, "bonding" even though it is basically a real "domestic service." When the agreed time has passed, these young people go back to their homes without any payment being made. Even though the Negroes call this bonding, they make a distinction: a) slavery is a stigma which always remains; b) true bonding is a stigma that does not disappear unless the bonded person himself pays the price of his bonding; c) the bonding which is called "domestic service" does not involve any stigma; they are workers and not menial laborers.